DO NOT ENTER: /G.Y./

Application No.: 10/590,785

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) An immunoagglutination immunoassay for inhibiting decrease in measured values in immunoassays, comprising:

mixing a test sample with an agent for inhibiting that inhibits a decrease in measured values in immunoagglutination immunoassays, wherein said decrease is caused by an interfering substance(s) present in the test sample, which

wherein said agent is an ionic surfactant having a molecular weight of 1000 to 100,000, and said ionic surfactant being a polymer in which a hydrophobic cyclic monomer(s) having an ionic functional group(s) is(are) polymerized to form a mixture of said test sample and said agent.

- 11. (Currently Amended) The immunoassay according to claim 10, comprising:
- a first step of mixing said test sample with said agent for inhibiting the decrease in measured values in immunoagglutination immunoassays; and
- a second step of subjecting said mixture to antigen-antibody immunoagglutination reaction with sensitized particles or with an antiserum to form a reacted mixture.
- 12. (**Previously Presented**) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said test sample is a biological sample.
- 13. (Original) The immunoassay according to claim 12, wherein said test sample is blood, serum or blood plasma.
- 14. (Currently Amended) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein the concentration of said agent for inhibiting the decrease in measured values in immunoassays in reaction solution is 0.01% to 5% (weight/volume).

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15-20. (Canceled)

- 21. (**Previously Presented**) The immunoassay according to claim 11, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.
- 22. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said polymer comprises a recurring unit represented by the following Formula [I]:

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
R^{1} & R^{2} \\
C & C \\
C & C \\
Ar & R^{3} \\
X
\end{array}$$

[I]

wherein Ar represents a hydrophobic ring; X represents the ionic functional group; R¹ to R³ independently represent hydrogen or alkyl; n represents an integer of 0 to 10; hydrogen atom(s) bound to a carbon atom(s) constituting Ar optionally being substituted with a substituent(s) which does(do) not adversely affect the effect of the present invention.

- 23. (**Previously Presented**) The immunoassay according to claim 11 or 22, wherein said hydrophobic cyclic monomer is an aromatic monomer.
- 24. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 23, wherein said aromatic monomer has a benzene ring.
- 25. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said ionic functional group is sulfonic group or a salt thereof, carboxylic group or a salt thereof, or an amine.
- 26. (**Previously Presented**) The immunoassay according to claim 25, wherein said ionic functional group is sulfonic group or a salt thereof.

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27. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 22, wherein said recurring unit is represented by the following Formula [II]:

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
R^1 & R^2 \\
 & \downarrow \\$$

[II]

wherein M represents an atom or a group which becomes a monovalent cation in aqueous solution; R¹ to R³ have the same meanings as said R¹ to R³ in said Formula [I]; and R⁴ to R⁶ independently represent hydrogen, lower alkoxyl or lower alkyl.

- 28. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 25, wherein said recurring unit is an anethole sulfonic acid salt or styrene sulfonic acid salt.
- 29. (**Previously Presented**) The immunoassay according to claim 22, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.
- 30. (**Previously Presented**) The immunoassay according to claim 27, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.